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For Immediate Release: Oct. 23, 2002

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Kernan Names Kendall Director of Commerce's Region Two Office in South Bend

SOUTH BEND — Putting the latest piece of the Indiana Department of Commerce's new regional delivery system in place, Lt. Governor Joe Kernan today appointed Sharon Kendall director of the agency's Region Two, which includes Elkhart, Fulton, LaGrange, LaPorte, Kosciusko, Marshall, Pulaski, St. Joseph and Starke counties.

"This regional approach is a bold change to the way we attract and keep quality businesses," said Kernan who serves as director of the Department of Commerce. "It is arguably the biggest undertaking in the agency's history, and we're confident that it will pay off with more good jobs for Hoosiers.

"Sharon will be great for this region – she knows economic development, she knows the area and she knows how Commerce operates. She's been an outstanding resource and we are pleased she is willing to take on this new role."

Currently serving as the manager of the existing business team in Commerce's Business Development Division, Kendall manages the state's business retention and expansion efforts and represents the state on various boards and commissions. Joining the agency in 1999 after a two-year stint as a special assistant in the Governor's office, Kendall has served as the field representative for northwest and north central Indiana counties.

"This is a great opportunity and one that I am thrilled about," said Kendall. "Region Two has a lot going for it and I am anxious to get started. I am honored by this responsibility and thankful for the opportunity Lt. Governor Kernan and the Indiana Department of Commerce have provided me. "

As regional director, Kendall will act as Commerce's representative in the field and will be responsible for the overall management of the regional office and delivery of agency services. In addition, Kendall will develop and maintain partnerships with regional business and community organizations and their leaders, collaborate with regional governments and local organizations on economic development projects, evaluate regional development needs and formulate a regional strategic plan, as well as educate the public on Commerce programs and services.

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The Department of Commerce is currently in the process of securing permanent office space for Region Two. In the meantime, Ivy Tech South Bend will provide temporary space for the regional office.

“From the get-go, we said we wanted to be in the field as soon as we could – so as we look for office space, we appreciate Ivy Tech stepping up to provide this support so we can get started as quickly as possible,” added Kernan.

Kernan announced plans in July to modernize the Department of Commerce through the establishment of 12 regional offices. Throughout the past month Kernan has appointed regional directors in Bloomington (Region Ten), Kokomo (Region Four), Terre Haute (Region Six) and Madison (Region Nine).

For more information on the Indiana Department of Commerce, the new regional offices or its programs, contact Jeff Harris, media relations director, at 317.232.2464 or visit the Web site at www.indianacommerce.com

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